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SUBJECT: ELECTION 74: GLOBE AND MAIL COLUMNIST BELIEVES
LIBERALS ENJOY SLIGHT EDGE

IN THE COURSE OF A TWO-HOUR DISCUSSION WITH THE
POLITICAL COUNSELOR, GEOFFREY STEVENS, COLUMNIST FOR
THE GLOBE AND MAIL, SAID HE BELIEVES THAT PIERRE TRUDEAU
AND THE LIBERALS ENJOY A SLIGHT EDGE OVER ROBERT
STANFIELD AND THE CONSERVATIVES. HE ALSO STATED THAT
HE DOES NOT EXPECT CANADA'S RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED
STATES TO BECOME AN ISSUE IN THE CAMPAIGN, ALTHOUGH
AN UNEXPECTED INCIDENT COULD CONVEIVABLY CAUSE ITS
BEING INJECTED.

STEVENS, WHO WAS ONE OF TIME MAGAZINE'S OTTAWA CORRESPONDENTS
AND AUTHOR OF A DEFINITIVE BIOGRAPHY OF ROBERT STANFIELD,
MADE THE FOLLOWING OBSERVATIONS ON THE ELECTION, US-
CANADIAN RELATIONS AND THE FUTURE OF NATO:

1. LIBERALS HAVE EDGE: ALTHOUGH THE CONSERVATIVES
WENT INTO THIS ELECTION ENJOYING AN EDGE, STEVENS
NOW BELEIEVES THAT TRUDEAU HAS REVERSED THAT POSITION
AND NOW HAS THE ADVANTAGE. THE LIBERALS ACCOMPLISHED
THIS BY SUCCEEDING IN PUTTING STANFIELD ON THE DEFENSIVE.
INSTEAD OF A CAMPAIGN IN WHICH THE LIBERALS WOULD BE
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DEFENDING THEIR MANAGEMENT OF THE CANADIAN ECONOMY,

THE CURIOUS SITUATION HAS EVOLVED IN WHICH STANDFIELD IS BEING FORCED TO EXPLAIN AND RE-EXPLAIN HIS PRICES AND INCOMES POLICY-- AND TO JUSTIFY AND DEFEND IT IN ORDER TO RECONCILE CONFLICTING VIEWS WITHIN HIS OWN PARTY. STANFIELD HAS NOT BEEN HELPED BY THE PROBLEM OF THE NOW ABORTED CADIDACY OF MONCTON MAYOR LEONARD JONES-- AN OPPONENT OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S BILINGUAL POLICY NOR THE REVELATION THAT QUEBEC SEPARATISTS ARE WORKING FOR THE TORIES IN QUEBEC. FINALLY, TRUDEAU HAS SUCCEEDED IN PROJECTING A MORE FAVORABLE IMAGE IN THE EARLY STAGES OF THE CAMPAIGN THAN STANFIELD (MOST WIDELY-PUBLISHED PHOTO OF STANFIELD TO DATE SHOWS

HIM AWKWARDLY DROPPING A FOOTBALL WHILE NEWS PHOTOS OF TRUDEAU HAVE SHOWN HIM SMILING AND WAVING FROM THE PLATFORM OF HIS CAMPAIGN TRAIN TO FRIENDLY CROWDS, WITH HIS ATTRACTIVE WIFE AT HIS SIDE).

2. QUEBEC: SOCIAL CREDIT PARTY APPEARS TO BE CRUMBLING IN QUEBEC WITH THE LIBERALS STANDING A BETTER CHANCE THAN THE TORIES OF PICKING UP THESE SEATS. WEAK POSITION OF THE SOCIAL CREDIT PARTY IS DUE TO THE POOR HEALTH OF ITS LEADER, REAL CAQUETTE, AND TO THE SPLIT WITHIN THE PARTY OVER LAST FALL'S PROVINCIAL ELECTION IN WHICH THE SOCREDS WERE WIPED OUT.

3. LANGUAGE: WHILE STEVENS DOES NOT BELIEVE THAT QUEBEC PREMIER BOURASSA'S CONTROVERSIAL LANGUAGE BILL (NO. 22) ON THE DOMINANT USE OF FRENCH IN QUEBEC WILL BECOME A SERIOUS CAMPAIGN ISSUE, HE RECOGNIZES THAT IT COULD BE A SILENT ISSUE THAT MIGHT ONLY SHOW ITSELF ON ELECTION DAY. HE IS MORE CONCERNED OVER THE IMPLICATIONS FOR CANADA IF THE ELECTION SHOULD RESULT IN A LIBERAL QUEBEC-BASED GOVERNMENT FACING A LARGELY ENGLISH-SPEAKING OPPOSITION, OR VICE VERSA. HIS WORRY IS THAT THE LIBERALS MIGHT GAIN AN ALMOST NEAR MONOPOLY IN QUEBEC WHILE CONTINUING TO LOSE SEATS IN ONTARIO AND THE REST OF CANADA.

4. ONTARIO: LIKE EVERY OTHER POLITICAL OBSERVER,
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STEVENS BELIEVES THE ELECTION WILL BE DECIDED IN ONTARIO. AND BECAUSE IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO PREDICT THE OUTCOME THERE, IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO FORECAST THE FINAL OUTCOME. STEVENS SAID THERE ARE RIDINGS IN ONTARIO, ESPECIALLY IN THE TORONTO METROPOLITAN AREA, WHICH HAVE A VOTER TURNOVER OF 30 PER CENT. THE SO-CALLED HIGH-RISE VOTER SINGLE OR YOUNG MARRIED APARTMENT DWELLERS, IS PROVING TO BE AN ESPECIALLY ELUSIVE VOTER AND MAY DECIDE THE

OUTCOME ON ELECTION DAY IN SOME TORONTO RIDINGS AND ELSEWHERE. (FOR EXAMPLE, STEVENS UNDERSTANDS THAT FINANCE MINISTER TURNER IS CONCERNED ABOUT THIS GROUP IN HIS OTTAWA RIDING AND HAS BEEN CAMPAIGNING IN HIGH-RISES HERE).

5. CANADA-US RELATIONS: STEVENS DID NOT EXPECT THAT CANADA-US RELATIONS WOULD BECOME AN ISSUE IN THE CAMPAIGN UNLESS SOME UNEXPECTED INCIDENT OCCURRED WHICH WOULD FORCE THE POLITICAL LEADERS TO TAKE SOME SORT OF A POSITION. STEVENS VOLUNTEERED THAT THIS WAS A PERIOD WHEN THE PRESIDENT, SECRETARY OF STATE AND OTHER SENIOR US GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS SHOULD OBSERVE A MORATORIUM ON STATEMENTS OR ACTIONS CONCERNING CANADA-US RELATIONS.

6. FUTURE OF CANADA-US RELATIONS: WHICHEVER PARTY FORMS THE NEXT GOVERNMENT OF CANADA, STEVENS BELIEVES THERE WILL BE INCREASED GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION IN THE ECONOMY TO ENSURE GREATER CANADIAN OWNERSHIP AND CONTROL OF THE EXPLOITATION OF RESOURCES. (HE NOTED THAT THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY, CONTRARY TO SOME POPULAR MISCONCEPTIONS, HAS TRADITIONALLY ADVOCATED MORE STATE INTERVENTION IN THE ECONOMY THAN HAS THE LIBERAL PARTY.) HOWEVER, HE DID NOT SEE ANY REASON WHY THIS CURRENT TREND IN CANADA SHOULD CAUSE ANY SERIOUS DIFFICULTY FOR CANADIAN-US RELATIONS.

7. FUTURE OF NATO: AGAIN, WHICHEVER PARTY WINS THE ELECTION, STEVENS BELIEVES THERE WILL BE A SERIOUS REVIEW OF THE LEVEL OF CANADIAN PARTICIPATION IN NATO FORCES IN EUROPE. THE CRUNCH WILL COME WHEN THE EXPENSIVE QUESTION OF RE-EQUIPPING CANADA'S NATO FORCES CAN NO

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LONGER BE POSTPONED. HE QUESTIONS WHETHER ANY GOVERNMENT CAN JUSTIFY TO THE CANADIAN PUBLIC THE EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS NECESSARY TO MAINTAIN A MODERNLY EQUIPPED CANADIAN FORCE IN EUROPE. MOREOVER, HE BELIEVES THAT BECAUSE OF THE RELATIVE SHORTAGE OF MANPOWER IN THE CANADIAN ARMED FORCES, IT WILL BE DIFFICULT FOR CANADA TO MEET DOMESTIC REQUIREMENTS AND REQUESTS FOR INTERNATIONAL PEACEKEEPING FORCES AND AT THE SAME TIME MAINTAIN ITS TROOP COMMITMENT TO NATO. AND HIS VIEW OF PRIORITIES IS IN THAT ORDER.

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